

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH**  
**WEEKLY CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER**  
January 11-January 18, 2018



**Upcoming Worship Services**

**Saturday, January 13, 2018 at 7:00pm**

Soul Assembly with Orange Sky

**Sunday, January 14, 2018 at 9:30am & 11:15am**

"Words in the Web"

Rev. Joel Miller, preaching

Jill Poremba, worship associate

Our plate collection will help support [our church](#).

**Sunday, January 21, 2018 at 9:30am & 11:15am**

"This Dangerous Congregation: First Unitarian's First 193 Years"

Rev. Joel Miller, preaching

Suzy Farrell, worship associate

Our plate collection will help support [Flower City Habitat Women Build](#).

**Gratitudes, Joys and Sorrows**

If you have a concern about a member of our congregation, please don't hesitate to contact Rev. Tina at 585-271-9070 x104.

**A Note from the President of our Congregation**

As we enter the year 2018, our Board of Trustees is undertaking an ambitious project to renew and refine the ends that form the basis for the policies and practices of our church. Organizing it will take the efforts of all of us on the Board, but it will only be completed successfully if the grand majority of congregants participate. We need to hear the voices of our congregation, and understand what we, the congregation, want to create with each other and in the world.

**Charting the Course for Our Road Ahead**



It is a key tenet of Unitarian Universalism that our churches are not defined by creed, church hierarchy or minister – but by congregants in covenant with each other. We decide who we are as a faith community. As we, the members of First Unitarian Church of Rochester, move forward in our transition and begin searching for a new minister, we each have a vital role to play in helping to chart our course as we embark on Our Road Ahead – together. During February and March of this year, we will gather in small groups to share our stories about our church and our wishes for its future, deepening our connections with each other, and building a shared vision of the community we hope to be. In these important gatherings, each congregant will have the opportunity to help clarify the core values, mission and goals of our church.

This process differs from the important work we did as a congregation at the beginning of this transition: After these sessions are completed, your Board of Trustees will leverage the information you provide as guidance in formally renewing and refining the ends that form the basis for the policies and practices of our church. In April, the Board will present a draft of our Values, Mission and Ends for reaction, feedback, and guidance from the congregation. With that feedback, the Board will make the needed changes to present a final version in May.

Throughout this endeavor, we will be guided by Laura Park of Unity Consulting, who has successfully led many UU congregations through this process of discernment. This work will also provide critical input to the Search Committee, providing potential candidates a clear picture of who we are, and who we wish to be, in our work together, in our city, and in the world. Our hope is that every congregant will take part in this process.

Whether you have only recently joined, have been a member for many years, or are a friend of the church – we want to hear your voices. The power of this process will be determined by how well it represents the diversity of our community.

To participate in this deeply rewarding experience, please sign up to help Map Our Road Ahead. Board members will be available with signup sheets and to answer your questions after services in January. Small group sessions have been scheduled during the day, in the evening, and on weekends to help everyone participate. In addition, food, beverages, and child care will be provided.

We look forward to charting our course for Our Road Ahead – with you.

## **Happening This Week**

**All are invited to a presentation on Policy Governance**, being offered this **Saturday, January 13, 6:00-7:00pm**; and two sessions on **Sunday, January 14, at 10:30am or 12:30pm**, each in Room 110. Policy Governance is being used by the Board of Trustees in its leadership role to guide the operations of our church so that we can realize our values and aspirations. Its framework is particularly important as we prepare for our search for a new Senior Minister. Mark your calendars!

**Thinking about Membership? Join us for UU201 after services this Sunday, January 14.** UU201 offers the information you need to discern whether you are ready to make the commitment of membership, and what joining involves. We will meet in Room 209. No sign-up needed. Kids are welcome. If you can't make it this weekend, future UU201 dates are Sunday, February 4 and Sunday, March 4. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Shannan Foos at [membership@rochesterunitarian.org](mailto:membership@rochesterunitarian.org).

**Youth Group Sponsors Blood Drive:** Youth Group will be sponsoring a blood drive this **Sunday, January 14, 9:00am-2:00pm** in the Williams Gallery. Receive a \$5 Dunkin' Donuts gift card when you come to donate. Go to [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to schedule an appointment or contact Suzy Farrell at [suzmacefa@gmail.com](mailto:suzmacefa@gmail.com) or 585-747-6379.

**A New Soul Matters Group for People of Color:** This Soul Matters group is a new pilot program open to adult church members and friends who identify as people of color. It will meet once a month to reflect on the worship theme from the members' heart centered and unique perspective. Participants will be asked to assess their experience as group participants, and offer feedback on the process and the material to the facilitators, and to the Minister of Spiritual Development. This group follows the same covenant and format as other Soul Matters groups. A maximum of 10 people can participate, and will start meeting on **Thursday, February 15, 6:00-8:00pm**. If you are interested in joining or would like more information, contact Ahlia Kitwana at [ahlia.kitwana@gmail.com](mailto:ahlia.kitwana@gmail.com) or Barb DeLeeuw at [bdeleeuw@rochester.rr.com](mailto:bdeleeuw@rochester.rr.com).

**Everyone's invited to Gilbert Hall after services this Sunday, January 14,** to see artwork from the Religious Education/Honduran student exchange, and enjoy some sweet Sunday munchies.

**The Black Lives Matter Task Force** meeting is re-scheduled for this **Sunday, January 14, 12:30pm** in Room 119. All are invited to attend. For questions, contact Len Stein at [drlstein@rochester.rr.com](mailto:drlstein@rochester.rr.com).

**Spiritual Direction is now offered here at our church. What is Spiritual direction?** Spiritual direction is a time honored way to help another person deepen their spiritual life through exploration of life's profound questions such as Who am I? Why am I here? How can I nurture a connection with that which is larger, more mysterious, and beyond myself? How can I bring my life into alignment with my spiritual values? Spiritual direction is a kind of "personal training for the soul" that responds to a universal yearning for understanding our relationship with the holy. In the community of our church, spiritual direction is valued as one way of helping congregants in their individual spiritual formation. Spiritual direction involves two people: a spiritual director and a seeker who is looking for a guide along the way. They meet, usually once a month, to plunge into whatever spiritual questions arise for the seeker. The spiritual director's role is to listen, to question, to hold with compassion, and to offer guidance. Spiritual direction is *not* for people who would be better supported in a psychotherapy setting, or people in crisis, such as a loss or a difficult health situation, who might benefit from pastoral care. Spiritual direction is offered by experienced, trained spiritual directors who are guided by their training, their code of ethics, and their own sense of compassion and mystery. Spiritual directors typically charge an hourly fee from \$40 to \$80, and fees are often negotiable. Our church has several spiritual directors who are available to offer their expertise. For more information about spiritual direction, call Joy Collins at 585-749-0695 or email to [joy@revjoycollins.com](mailto:joy@revjoycollins.com), or call Libby Moore at 585-315-7015 or email to [libbymoore81@gmail.com](mailto:libbymoore81@gmail.com). You can also look for our information table this **Sunday, January 14, between services.**

**Church Bookstore Open Sunday:** Our church bookstore will be open this **Sunday, January 14, 10:00am-1:00pm**. We are featuring *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry* by Mitra Rahnema. We also have several new titles among our selection of both fiction and non-fiction. Topics cover race, politics, economics, inequality, environment, spirituality, human rights, history, fantasy, and more. Stop in and browse, chat with the bookstore volunteers and other congregants, and find that special book you know you will love reading. As always, your purchases help support our church. We gladly accept cash and check. For more information, contact John Steepy at [jgsteepy65@gmail.com](mailto:jgsteepy65@gmail.com).

**Our next exhibit in the Williams Gallery** features paintings by Casey Cardillo, a teacher in the Creative Workshop at the Memorial Art Gallery. Please join us for the opening reception on **Friday, January 19, 6:00-8:00pm**. An advocate for animals and lover of nature, Ms. Cardillo uses color and form to explore and express her appreciation for the beauty of life, nature, and imagination. This exhibit runs from Thursday, January 18 to Monday, February 26.

## **Calls to Action**

**The Rummage Sale Committee urgently seeks storage space for donated items.** Several members of our congregation are moving to smaller quarters and would like to contribute things to our church sale that they will no longer need. The committee needs part of a garage or storage area to hold these donations until the Rummage Sale in early June. Please contact Sandy Hollands by phone at 585-703-2979 or e-mail at [sandy.hollands@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.hollands@gmail.com).

**First UU Plate Committee:** Our Plate Committee is preparing for the New Year and scheduling organizations to receive the generosity of our members. Please take a few moments to review the requirements and submit your requests. Information and submission forms can be found on our church website at <http://rochesterunitarian.org/giving-away-the-plate/>. For questions, contact Elaine Richane at 585-203-4712 or [richanee@frontiernet.net](mailto:richanee@frontiernet.net).

**News from the Nominating Committee:** Calling all members! The deadline to make recommendations for the Search Committee is approaching. Please give consideration for up to three members who are thoughtful, team oriented and represent a diversity of involvement across church life. Don't have names to recommend? No problem! We'd like to hear that as well. It helps us to know that our outreach efforts have touched all

members. Recommendations will be accepted until **Sunday, January 21**, at table sessions after Sunday services, or by email at [nominating@rochesterunitarian.org](mailto:nominating@rochesterunitarian.org).

**A Green Tip from the Environmental Task Force:** Do you have a pet, such as a dog, cat or other animal that lives in your house or apartment? There will be water bowls for them, perhaps multiple water bowls. How often do we toss old water down the drain, and then replace it with fresh for our pets? I know I've done that many times, but now that old water gets used for the house plants. This conserves fresh water, and it's great to remember to water your house plants. Reduce, Reuse, Re-Purpose, Recycle.

**If you enjoyed the “Inaugurating Hope” event** at our church last January 20, 2017, the group that initiated it, the Pachamama Alliance, will be holding a similar event again this year on **Saturday, January 20, from 2:00-5:00pm, at the Greece Baptist Church (1230 Long Pond Rd 14626)**. The focus this year is on learning how to embody the inner unity, confidence and power we need to be active agents of healing. This event is co-sponsored by the Social Justice Council. For questions or more information, contact John Keevert at [jkeev@frontiernet.net](mailto:jkeev@frontiernet.net).

## **Other News and Reminders**

### **Vipassana Meditation**

Vipassana, from the Buddhist tradition, is a simple form of mindfulness and breath awareness. You need not be familiar with Buddhism or sit on the floor! Participants take part in a 40-minute sit. All are welcome to join, **every Monday at 7:30pm**.

**Next Sunday, January 21, after both services**, Jenna Bernardi will offer brief Tarot readings in exchange for a donation to the Grace Fund. Sign up that day at her table in the Williams Gallery for your appointment.

**Leadership Training Opportunities:** The Nominating Committee is working with the Unitarian Universalist Association to provide leadership training to both prospective and current leaders within our congregation. Are you considering a leadership role within our church? If so, please reach out to the Nominating Committee at [nominating@rochesterunitarian.org](mailto:nominating@rochesterunitarian.org).

**Wednesday Morning Book Club** next meets on **Wednesday, February 7, at 11:15am**. This month's selection is the Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Known World* by Edward P. Jones. Set in antebellum Virginia, the novel examines ownership of slaves by both white and black Americans. All are welcome. For questions, contact Joyce Henzel at [joycehenzel@gmail.com](mailto:joycehenzel@gmail.com). The reading for the **Wednesday, March 7** meeting is *Tribe* by Sebastian Junger. This book explains why we are stronger when we come together, and how that can be achieved even in today's divided world. All interested are welcome to attend. For questions, contact John Swartz at [johnswartz@yahoo.com](mailto:johnswartz@yahoo.com).

**Susan B. Anthony Birthday Luncheon:** Elaine Weiss, a journalist and author, will be the keynote speaker for this year's luncheon at the **Rochester Riverside Convention Center on Wednesday, February 14, 12:00-1:30pm**. Her second book, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* will be published by Viking in March. Susan B. Anthony was a longtime member of our congregation and First Unitarian will have our own tables at the luncheon. We need to secure paid reservations soon. We offer carpooling from our church. For reservations or more information, call Sally Whitbeck at 585-461-3150.